

Senate Bill No. 1838

CHAPTER 693

An act to amend Section 129856 of, to add Section 129880 to, and to add and repeal Section 129881 of, the Health and Safety Code, relating to health facilities.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2006. Filed with
Secretary of State September 29, 2006.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1838, Perata. Health facilities: construction plans.

The existing Alfred E. Alquist Hospital Facilities Seismic Safety Act of 1983 requires design and construction standards for hospital buildings that house patients who have less than the capacity of normally healthy persons to protect themselves. Existing law also requires that those standards specify that hospitals must be reasonably capable of providing services to the public after a disaster. Existing law requires the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHDP) to approve or reject all plans for the construction or alteration of a hospital building. Existing law specifically requires the office, contingent upon an appropriation in the annual Budget Act, to establish a program for training fire and life safety officers to facilitate the timely performance of the office's duties and responsibilities relating to the review of plans and specifications pertaining to the design and observation of construction of hospital buildings, as specified.

This bill, in addition, would authorize the office to establish other training programs as necessary to ensure that a sufficient number of qualified persons are available to facilitate the timely performance of the office's duties and responsibilities, as specified.

The bill would authorize the office to exempt from its plan review process construction or alteration projects for hospital buildings and certain other buildings with estimated construction costs of \$50,000 or less if specified criteria are met. The bill would require a presubmittal meeting between the office and the design professionals for construction or alteration projects for those buildings with estimated construction costs of \$20,000,000 or more.

This bill would require the department to submit comprehensive reports on the training program, and would, until January 1, 2012, also require the office to assess processing time for plan review and to provide an update of this assessment to the Legislature no later than February 1, 2007, and no later than February 1 of each year thereafter.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 129856 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

129856. (a) Contingent on an appropriation in the annual Budget Act, the office shall establish a program for training fire and life safety officers. The goal of this program shall be to provide a sufficient number of qualified persons to facilitate the timely performance of the office's duties and responsibilities relating to the review of plans and specifications pertaining to the design and observation of construction of hospital buildings and buildings described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725, in order to ensure compliance with applicable facility design and construction codes and standards.

(b) The office shall prepare a comprehensive report on the training program setting forth its goals, objectives, and structure. The report shall include the number of fire and life safety officers to be trained annually, a timeline for training completion, a process for gathering information to evaluate the training programs efficiency that includes dropout and retention rates, and a mechanism to annually assess the need for the training program to continue. The report shall be submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee by April 1, 2007.

(c) The office may establish other training programs as necessary to ensure that a sufficient number of qualified persons are available to facilitate the timely performance of the office's duties and responsibilities relating to the review of plans and specifications pertaining to the design and construction of hospital buildings and buildings described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725, to ensure compliance with applicable safety codes and standards.

(d) If additional training programs are established pursuant to subdivision (c), the office shall prepare a comprehensive report on the training program setting forth its goals, objectives, and structure. The report shall include the number of individuals trained pursuant to subdivision (c) annually, a timeline for training completion, a process for gathering information to evaluate the training programs efficiency that includes dropout and retention rates, and a mechanism to annually assess the need for the training program to continue. The report shall be submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee three years after the training program has been implemented.

SEC. 2. Section 129880 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

129880. (a) The office may exempt from its plan review process construction or alteration projects for hospital buildings and buildings described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725 with estimated construction costs of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or less. The criteria for exemption shall include, but not be limited to, plans that have been stamped and signed by the design professionals of record.

(b) Projects that have been split into a series of smaller projects in order to avoid the qualifying dollar limits shall not be approved. The office shall maintain its construction observation mandate to ensure public safety and California Building Standards Code compliance for approved projects.

(c) A presubmittal meeting between the office and the design professionals shall be required for construction or alteration projects for hospital buildings and buildings described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725 with estimated construction costs of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) or more.

(d) The office may adopt regulations for this section to make specific the exemption criteria and processes authorized pursuant to subdivision (a), and the complete plan review process required pursuant to subdivision (c).

SEC. 3. Section 129881 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

129881. (a) The office shall assess processing time for plan review, and shall provide an annual update on this assessment to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature no later than February 1, 2007, and no later than February 1 of each year thereafter.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2012, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2012, deletes or extends that date.